

REMARKS

Claims 13-24 including independent claims 13 and 20 remain in the application. New claims 29 and 30 have been added to the application. Claims 25-28 have been cancelled.

Independent claims 13-24, 16-22, and 25-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,820,036 to *Saito*. Claims 15, 23, and 24 stand objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims. However, the Examiner has indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Independent claim 13 has been amended to include the further limitation of a paint tube having an outer surface where a hollow shaft is concentrically aligned with the paint tube defining an air channel with the outer surface of the paint tube.

Independent claim 20 has been amended to include the limitation that a first annular wall has an "outer surface" and a second annular wall has an "inner surface" where the outer surface of the first annular wall defines an annular channel with the inner surface of the second annular wall. *Saito* discloses an electrostatic coating apparatus 1 where paint flows in the direction of arrow A through a driving shaft 3A into an atomizing head 4. A casing 16 defines an inner ring 17 and a cylindrical portion of the inner ring 17A, together which define an air channel for shaping air that flows in the direction of arrow B. The shaping air is routed between inner ring 17 and the cylindrical portion of inner ring 17A through a guide ring 18 which defines a circumferential groove 19 routing air through holes 20 defined in the guide ring 18. Air exits the guide ring 18 and contacts the atomizing head 4 to shape the pattern of atomized paint exiting the atomizing head 4.

Saito fails to disclose an air channel that is defined between an outer surface of a paint tube (first annular wall) and the inner surface of a hollow shaft (second annular wall) as recited in independent claims 13 and 20. As stated above, *Saito* discloses an air channel separately defined by a casing 16 independent of a paint delivery tube. Therefore, applicant respectfully

submits that *Saito* fails to disclose a paint tube for delivering powder paint and having an outer surface and a hollow shaft concentrically aligned with the tube defining an air channel with the outer surface of the tube. Furthermore, *Saito* fails to disclose a first annular wall having an outer surface and a second annular wall having an inner surface where the first annular wall defines a paint pipe to provide paint to a paint atomizer and the inner surface of the first annular wall and the outer surface of the second annular wall define an air channel for providing pressurized air to the paint atomizer.

Therefore, applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 13 and 20 are patentable over *Saito*. Claims 14-19 depend from independent claim 13, and therefore, include each and every limitation recited in independent claim 13. Therefore, claims 14-19 are also believed to be patentable over *Saito*.

Claims 21-28 depend from independent claim 20, and therefore, include each and every limitation recited in independent claim 20. Therefore, claims 21-28 are also believed to be patentable over *Saito*.

New claim 29 has been added to the application and includes the limitations set forth in claims 13 and 15. As the Examiner indicated, claim 15 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations set forth in independent claim 13 and any intervening claim. Applicant, therefore, respectfully submits that new claim 29 is patentable over *Saito*.

New claim 30 has been added to the application and includes each and every limitation set forth in claim 20 and claim 23. The Examiner has indicated the line of patentability that the elements recited in dependent claim 23 in combination with those recited in independent claim 20. Therefore, applicant respectfully submits that new claim 30 is patentable over *Saito*.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the Application, as amended, is now presented in a condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited. Further and favorable reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action is hereby requested.

Although it is believed that no fee is due for the filing of this Amendment, the Commissioner is authorized to charge our Deposit Account No. 08-2789 for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayments regarding this Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

HOWARD & HOWARD ATTORNEYS, P.C.

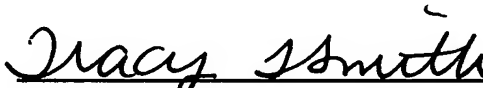


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CERTIFICATE OF EXPRESS MAILING

I hereby certify that the enclosed **Amendment** is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as Express Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope as "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee," Mailing Label No. **EL998311199US** and addressed to **Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment**, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on **February 26, 2004**.



Tracy L. Smith